

Should we be dealing with the larger question, the runaway entitlements, the lack of money to adequately fund NIH or scientific research or education but we cannot because our budget is totally out of control? Should we be doing this? Absolutely. That is what we are here for. We have talked about this for the last 5 years since I have been back here. Despite the many alternatives that have been presented to the White House, every one has been rejected.

So at least let's do those things where we have more control through the appropriations process and better manage government, make it more efficient and make it more effective. That is why we point out these and we will continue to point out these in the "Waste of the Week" No. 10. I cannot wait to get down here next week and do No. 11.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. CARDIN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. COATS). Without objection, it is so ordered.

CONCLUSION OF MORNING BUSINESS

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Morning business is now closed.

STATING THE POLICY OF THE UNITED STATES REGARDING THE RELEASE OF UNITED STATES CITIZENS IN IRAN

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will proceed to the consideration of S. Con. Res. 16, which the clerk will report.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A concurrent resolution (S. Con. Res. 16) stating the policy of the United States regarding the release of United States citizens in Iran.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, there will be 30 minutes of debate equally divided in the usual form prior to a vote on adoption of S. Con. Res. 16.

The Senator from Maryland.

Mr. CARDIN. Mr. President, I first want to thank Senator RISCH for his tireless dedication to the plight of the three American citizens unjustifiably detained in Iran, as well as his efforts to call upon the Iranian Government to cooperate in locating Robert Livingston, a missing fourth American, and also returning him to his family.

I also want to thank my colleagues from the States these Americans are from—Senators FEINSTEIN and BOXER from California, Senators STABENOW and PETERS from Michigan, Senators NELSON and RUBIO from Florida, and

Senators CRAPO and RISCH from Idaho—for their efforts in working with the families of these American citizens who have been held too long in Iran.

I call upon the government of Iran to do the right thing—do the right thing and immediately release these citizens and send them home to their families and communities as soon as possible. The resolution has a statement of policy that is absolutely unobjectionable in any way.

Let me point out one last thing, if I might. As the ranking member of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, I want to reassure the families of these Americans that I will continue to urge the U.S. Government to use every tool at its disposal to secure the release of these Americans, and I will continue to call upon the Iranian Government to immediately and unconditionally release these men and send them home to their families.

I am very pleased we will soon be voting on this resolution, which unequivocally says that America should use all the tools at its disposal for the return of these Americans.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. CARDIN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. CARDIN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that during the quorum call, the time be equally divided between the majority and the minority.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. CARDIN. I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Ms. STABENOW. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Ms. STABENOW. Mr. President, I commend Senator RISCH, and I am pleased to be a cosponsor of this resolution, which is incredibly important to people in Michigan as well as across the country.

We have a very special man who unfortunately is being held as a hostage in Iran, and he needs to come home now. I have had the honor of getting to know the family of Amir Hekmati. He is a patriotic American from Flint, MI, who served his country honorably and bravely as a marine between 2001 to 2005 in Iraq and Afghanistan. He is an American citizen but also became a dual citizen with Iran in order to be able to visit his grandmother and other family members in Iran.

In August 2011, he was visiting his grandmother and was arrested by the

Iranian authorities and charged with spying for the CIA, which was absolutely false, absolutely trumped-up charges. He was then deprived of a fair trial and jailed on those totally trumped-up charges.

Of those Americans confirmed as prisoners in Iran, none have been incarcerated longer than Amir Hekmati. He has been waiting the longest to come home. He has been tortured and is locked inside a prison notorious for its deplorable conditions. Meanwhile, Amir's father is battling terminal brain cancer.

I was very honored to have the opportunity to spend time with his family—his mom and dad, his sister and two brothers—who are passionately engaged in speaking out, coming to Washington, meeting with the State Department, and making sure we are laser-focused on their brother and their son. My heart went out to them.

Think about all of us who have children. Speaking to his mom and dad, it is frightening, it is deplorable, it is outrageous, and he needs to come home—now.

I can't say enough about the love and devotion of the Hekmati family. I have had a number of different opportunities to meet with them. Amir's sister and brother have frequently been here in Washington making sure we are not forgetting about this brave marine. They have fought so hard for his freedom.

I also commend Congressman DAN KILDEE, who represents the Hekmati family in Flint, MI, for being a great partner and such a strong advocate and a strong voice on behalf of Amir and his family.

This resolution is a clear message to the Iranian Government: If you want a seat at the table with the rest of the international community, free Amir Hekmati now, as well as all the other U.S. citizens who are being held as hostages.

Our thoughts and prayers go out to all of their families. I can tell this body that for us, in Michigan, we are laser-focused on making sure that Amir Hekmati's name is lifted up at every opportunity and that it is very clear that this brave, courageous marine who served our country so well has the full support of our government to bring him home immediately.

I congratulate and thank my colleague.

I am proud to be one of the cosponsors on this resolution.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Maryland.

Mr. CARDIN. Mr. President, I thank Senator STABENOW for her work on this resolution and for her actions on behalf of her constituent who is being held in Iran. She has been extremely helpful in bringing this resolution forward.

I see Senator RISCH on the floor. I want to state one last time that because of Senator RISCH, we are on the floor tonight with a vote in the full